



King County Board of Ethics  
900 Fourth Avenue, Suite 900  
Bank of California Building  
Seattle, WA 98164 MS BOC-ES-0900  
206-296-1586 FAX 206-205--0725  
board.ethics@metrokc.gov/ethics/

## **KING COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS MEETING NOTICE**

**When:** Monday, March 15, 2004, at 4:30 p.m.

**Where:** Bank of California Building  
900 Fourth Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Marion Street, Seattle  
5<sup>th</sup> floor conference room, northwest corner of building

### **AGENDA**

1. ***Approval of Agenda.***
2. ***Approval of Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2004.***
3. ***Request by HIV/AIDS Planning Council for Review and Approval of Rules Revision.***  
Review and discussion.
4. ***Event for Board and Commission Chairs.***
  - Review matrix of affected boards and commissions
  - Review of poll to be conducted by Ethics office
5. ***Staff Report***
  - Staff Informational Response Summary
  - Proposed Ordinance Relating to Oaths for Disclosure Statements and Forms Under the Code of Ethics – update
  - Financial Disclosure Program Status
  - Awareness Campaign Status
  - Ombudsman Findings and Conclusions

Upon advance request, reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities  
are available by calling 206-296-1586 or 771 TTY  
**ALTERNATE FORMATS AVAILABLE**



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### **Minutes of the March 15, 2004, Meeting of the King County Board of Ethics**

The March 15, 2004, meeting of the King County Board of Ethics was called to order by Acting Chair Ron Carlson at 4:41 p.m. Board members in attendance were:

Roland H. Carlson  
Margaret T. Gordon, Ph.D.  
Rev. Paul F. Pruitt

Lois Price Spratlen, Ph.D., chair, and Jerry Saltzman, member, had excused absences.

Others in attendance:

Catherine A. Clemens, Administrator, King County Board of Ethics  
Alan Abrams, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and Board Counsel  
Jesse Chipps, Program Analyst and Staff Liaison for the HIV/AIDS Planning Council, Seattle-King County Department of Public Health

Acting Chair Carlson asked for introductions from those present.

1. *Approval of Agenda.* Dr. Gordon moved and Rev. Pruitt seconded that the board approve the proposed agenda. The board unanimously adopted the motion.

2. *Approval of Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2004.* Rev. Pruitt moved and Dr. Gordon seconded that the board approve the February 17, 2004, meeting minutes. The board unanimously adopted the motion and the minutes were approved.

3. *Request by HIV/AIDS Planning Council for Review and Approval of Rules Revision.* Ms. Chipps briefed the board and explained the request. HIV/AIDS Planning Council asks the Board of Ethics to review a revision to its rules regarding conflict of interest and determine whether or not the rules adequately address potential conflict for council members. Basically, the Council wishes to allow all Council members to discuss and vote on the Council's core functions (prioritization and allocation of dollars to service categories and/or population groups), while ensuring that protection against conflict of interest is maintained. She noted that all procurement activities (writing the Request for Proposals, evaluating proposals, choosing vendors, negotiating contracts, monitoring contracts) are done by King County. Current by-law language makes it absolutely clear that Council members must recuse themselves from decision-making if they have a financial stake in a decision that is on the table. She described safeguards to ensure disclosure and recusal take place.

Dr. Gordon stated that the proposed changes were well-thought out and were to be put in place prior to conflicts. Rev. Pruitt agreed that the changes were clear and well-stated. Mr. Carlson asked if there were any specific problems with current by-laws? Yes, the current by-laws are broad and overly restrictive and prohibit participation for members on issues completely outside of their work experience. Therefore, the by-laws are difficult to understand hard to sort out real conflict of interest situations. Mr. Carlson asked for comment from Mr. Abrams. Mr. Abrams stated that he and Ms. Clemens help draft the new language, which he felt provides clear and discrete language and should be understandable

about what a council member may do or not do to avoid conflict of interest. Following discussion, Rev. Pruitt moved that the suggested changes to the HIV/AIDS Planning Council comply with the King County Code of Ethics; Dr. Gordon seconded the motion and the board unanimously approved the motion.

4. *Event for Board and Commission Chairs.* Ms. Clemens briefed the board and presented a matrix of 54 affected county boards and commissions. She noted that most of the board or commission names indicate the function they serve and meet from two to twelve times per year, depending upon their work. A detail on each board was made available. The board reviewed the planned event and a draft questionnaire to board and commission chairs designed to gauge their level of interest on attending and activity. Following discussion, the board determined that it would take additional time considering this activity and questionnaire and would address the matter at the next scheduled board meeting.

5. *Staff Report.* Ms. Clemens briefed the Board. Staff Informational Response Summary. The ethics administrator issued thirteen written staff informational responses upon request by county employees between February 5, 2004, through March 3, 2004. Ethics issues addressed by the responses include receipt of broadcast sales emails, post-employment, use of county resources related to county benefit, solicitation of employees for employee recognition event, attendance at events and seminars, code provisions affecting board members, solicitation of outside businesses for employee recognition event, use of county resources re: betting pool, use of county funds to recognize volunteers, outside employment, political activities, and de minimis standards for volunteer recognition. It was suggested during the February meeting that relevant advisory opinions be referenced next to each topic and the summary placed on the Web site. This would result in a duplication of effort. Ms. Clemens provided a copy of the ethics Web site, and the first page of the link to advisory opinions, noting that general topics are listed first, followed by the relevant opinion number, subject, and date issued. Currently, Mr. Abrams and Jerry Saltzman routinely receive copies of the SIRs, but anyone requesting a copy may receive one. Proposed Ordinance Relating to Oaths for Disclosure Statements and Forms Under the Code of Ethics. The administrator announced the matter had not yet been forward to the executive by the office of Executive Services. Financial Disclosure Update. As of March 15, 1,800 (77%) of 2,333 affected employees had filed; only 219 (46%) of the affected 478 board and commission members had filed. Ms. Clemens noted that considerable effort has been made to accommodate and assist staff liaisons, but each year filings are slow. Frequently it is the same board or commission and the same staff liaison. Current plans include a report to directors on filing status on March 25 and a reminder letter from the executive to each member on March 26, with a copy to the directors and staff liaisons. Ms. Clemens stated that without penalties, there is little incentive to file. She noted that under the ethics code, employees may be terminated for failing to file. Members 'shall be removed by their appointing authority' for failing to file, but the executive has been reluctant to take that step. For the first time in several years, not all members filed last year. Ms. Clemens proposed to address the matter directly with the executive soon after filing deadline on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Awareness Campaign Status. The administrator directed the board's attention to the redesigned and edited Summary of the Code of Ethics and displayed the ethics poster; over 350 had been distributed throughout the county. Ombudsman Findings and Conclusions. The board reviewed the documents.

Dr. Gordon moved and Rev. Pruitt seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. The Board unanimously approved the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Approved this 19th day of April, 2004, by the King County Board of Ethics.

Signed for the Board: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Lois Price Spratlen, Chair